



ANNUAL Report 2016



enVISIONing success



**Kentucky Office for the Blind
State Rehabilitation Council**

2016 State Rehabilitation Council



Business and Employment Committee

**Susan Ament
Nancy Clayton
Deborah Culpepper
Randall Deaton
Dennis Franklin
Jennifer Hall
Twyla Hammons (Ex-officio)**

**Daniel Scott Heads
Cathy Jackson
Vanessa Jones
David Lawson
Debra Lewis
Grant Logsdon
Carla Ruschival**



Council Meeting



Consumer Services Committee

**Kevin Shurn
Peggy Sinclair-Morris
Rhonda Skidmore
Todd Stephens
George Stokes
Shirley Stivers
Theresa Thomas**

Message from the SRC Chair



Shirley Stivers

Greetings!

As chair of the Office for the Blind's (OFB) State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), I am humbled by the amount of time, effort and commitment that all of the OFB staff and council members put forth to make the council such a valuable tool in educating society, equalizing employment opportunities and promoting Independence for blind and visually impaired individuals in their quality of life, across the state of Kentucky.

The SRC encompasses six standing committees; Executive, Consumer Services, Business and Employment Opportunities, Government and Public Relations, Nominating and Bylaws, and Planning to carry out the work of the council. Each are comprised of both SRC representatives and OFB staff, working both separately and together, to provide up-to-date information regarding blind and visually impaired consumers and their needs.

At each meeting, the council hears from OFB staff on an area of specialty. This year we had training on the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) regulations, the Bioptic Driving Program, the Independent Living and Older Individuals who are Blind programs, as well as a presentation of the results of the 2015 Consumer Satisfaction Survey.

This has been a year of change for the Office for the Blind and the SRC. The WIOA was passed by Congress, cuts to OFB's budget necessitated the agency closing of all but Category I in the Order of Selection, and new emphasis was placed on Pre-Employment Transition Services. The council has been kept informed by the agency and has discussed and provided input on all of these changes, as well as the State Plan and the Consumer Satisfaction Survey.

As we unite our goals and face the challenges of the coming year, I hope to serve this council with strong leadership.

Shirley Stivers
SRC Chair

Message from Executive Director



Allison Flanagan

The Office for the Blind, in collaboration with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) is proud to present the 2016 annual report, **enVISIONing success**. The annual report is an opportunity for the agency to showcase our successes throughout the year. This is exhibited through our partnerships and collaborative initiatives that assisted individuals who are blind or visually impaired to obtain or maintain employment and increase their independence. These successes are a demonstration of the skilled workforce and strong partnerships that continue to move our agency forward through challenges and more importantly, opportunities.

The annual report highlights our agency's programs, provides statistical data and features stories about the personal successes of a few of the individuals that benefited from our services. In addition, the report provides information related to our national Career Pathways for Individuals with Disabilities demonstration grant and showcases the tremendous collaborative efforts that occurred in the first year. Kentucky is one of only four states awarded this five-year grant.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) that passed in July 2014 has a higher focus on students with disabilities and transition services. We have provided specific information in this report about our focus on implementing new service initiatives that prepare youth and students with disabilities for employment and post-secondary training.

I encourage you to share and celebrate with us the **enVISIONing successes** captured in our annual report.

Allison Flanagan, MRC, CRC
Executive Director



Consumer Satisfaction Survey

Results of the Consumer Satisfaction Survey indicate that in 2016, consumers expressed high degrees of satisfaction with their experiences. The Human Development Institute at the University of Kentucky coordinated a telephone survey with a total of 285 consumers that were closed successful and unsuccessful in employment in 2016.

Eighty-seven (87%) of all participating consumers rated that services they received through the Office for the Blind as a 1 or 2 on a five point scale where 1 = “excellent” and 5 = “poor”. In addition, for those with a case closed successfully, 91.1% indicated that their needs were met through the services received by responding with a 1 or 2.

At the time of the survey, 68.5% of all participating consumers reported that they were currently working in paid competitive employment status. 9.3% were unemployed and currently seeking employment, which is a decrease of 10% from the previous year, and 17.3% were unemployed and not seeking employment, an increase of 5.5% from the previous year.

Those with cases closed successfully had the highest competitive employment percentage at 80.6% suggesting the benefit of service provision toward obtaining and maintaining employment. As is the case in previous years, participants had overall positive regard for their counselors and other staff at OFB. 89.4% of respondent’s rated the professionalism of their counselors as “excellent” or “very good”. They additionally rated the quality of services from OFB as “excellent” or “very good” at 84.6% overall.



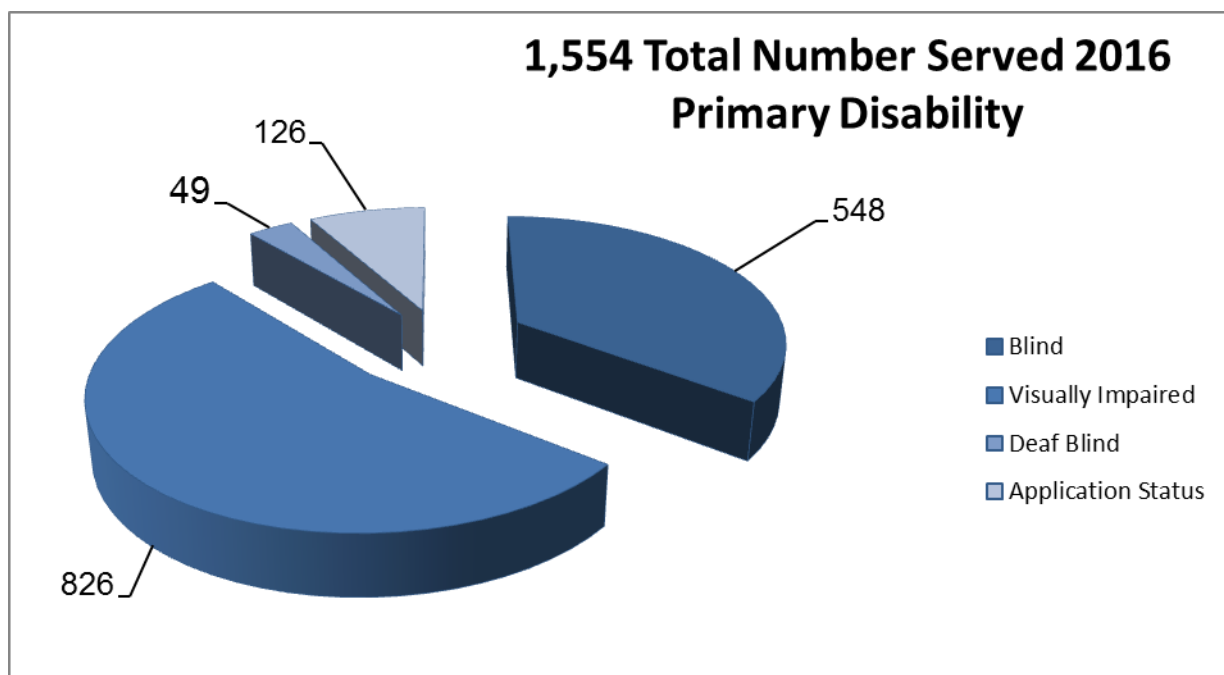
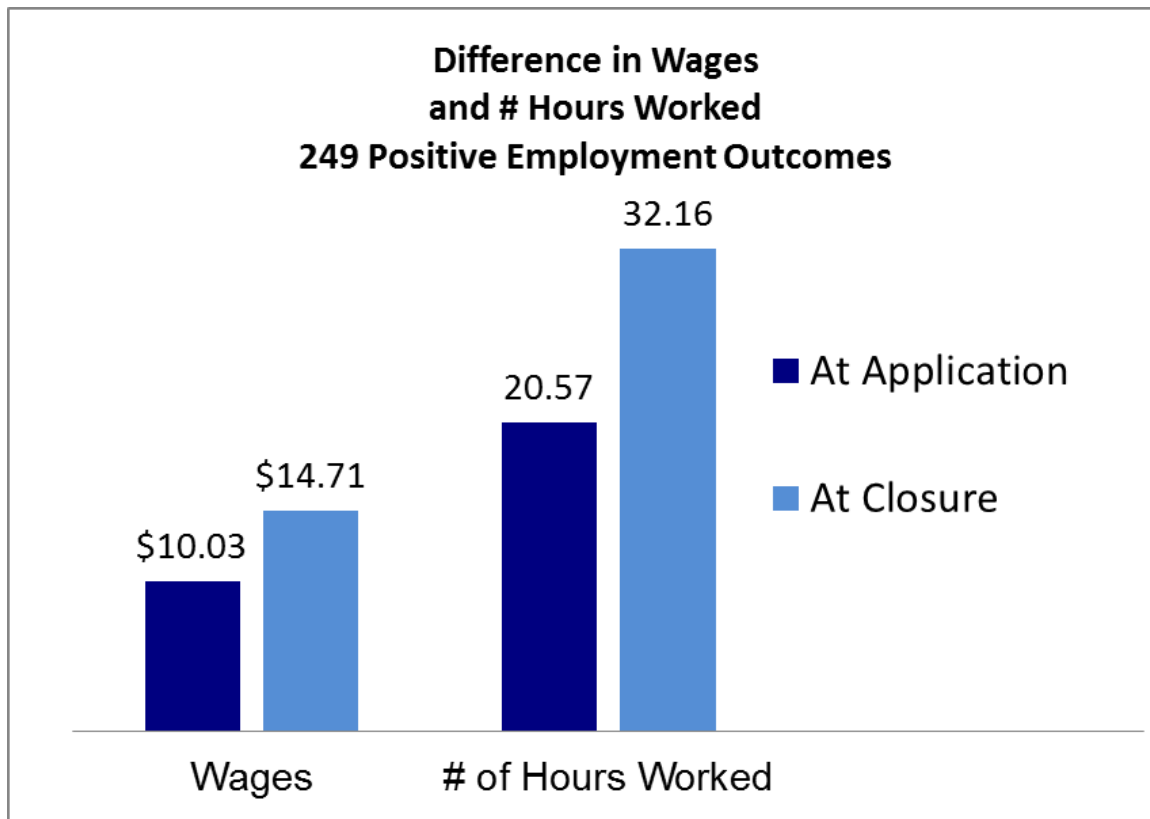
Independent Living Services

The Office for the Blind (OFB) provides Independent Living (IL) services to assist persons with vision impairments achieve greater levels of independence within their homes, workplaces, and communities. The Older Individuals Who Are Blind (OIB) program expands independent living services to people age 55 years and over. By learning adaptive daily living skills, older individuals are given opportunities to gain greater levels of independence in an environment of their choice.

A broad range of independent living services is offered including but not limited to skills training in areas such as daily living, communications, and the use of low-vision devices. Assessments and training are individualized with focus on each person’s needs and goals. Independent Living services are available in all Kentucky counties and training can be conducted in the person’s home, OFB offices or other locations within the person’s community.

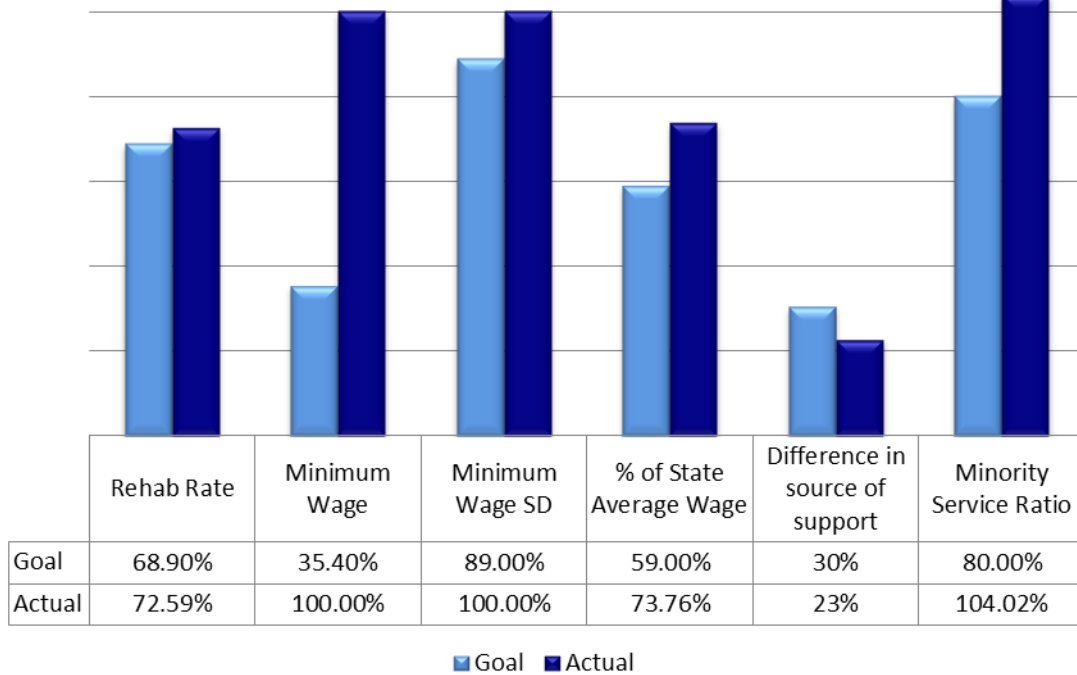
In FY2016, 831 persons participated in the Independent Living Services. Of this number, 152 individuals were under the age of 55 years and 679 were age 55 or more. Services were provided to individuals living in 116 counties within the Commonwealth.

Vocational Rehabilitation Statistics

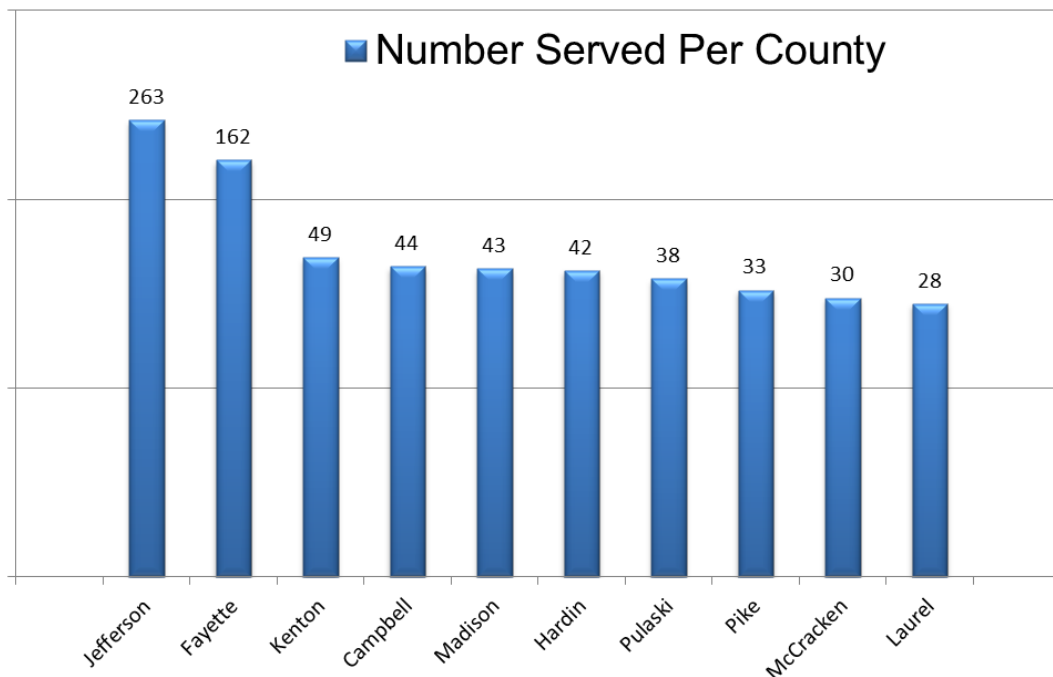


Vocational Rehabilitation Statistics

2016 Agency Performance Standards and Indicators

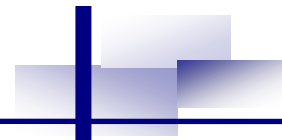


Number Served Per County



The chart above shows the top ten counties per number served in FY 2016. OFB served individuals in 116 of the 120 counties in the state. (96%)

Consumer Success Stories



Wanda Moore

Wanda Moore was diagnosed with Stargardt disease in her late 20s. It is the most common form of inherited juvenile macular degeneration, which is why she was surprised at the late onset. Until recently the disease had progressed relatively slowly over her lifetime, but now at 78 it is advancing more quickly. Moore explained that while she had time to adjust to her vision loss over the years, she now has to find new ways of doing things because she has no central vision and can't see details. Her vision loss challenges her to do the activities she loves such as cooking, gardening, fishing and crafts in a different way and the Office for the Blind (OFB) has helped her adapt.

When Moore contacted OFB about services, an IL counselor was assigned to work with her on using a variety of guides to help her with written communication as well as banking. Her counselor provided assistive devices to help her in the kitchen, where she still prepares meals. They worked together on using bumps and other tactile labeling on her stove, canisters and drawers to help her locate items in her kitchen. They also worked on the pantry and bathroom cabinets, and made closets more accessible by using paint sample colors.

Moore said that the raised letters, labels on the drawers, dots, and the special cutting board to keep her from slicing her fingers while chopping are very useful. She said her independent living Counselor was so helpful and the things she provided and showed her have gone a long way toward keeping her independent in her home.

A self-advocate, Moore has obtained grants to get a CCTV and a portable CCTV. She has also offered to give support and guidance to another individual in her community who lost vision suddenly. In addition, she has talked with the manager of her local Kroger store about getting a helper for shopping and suggested they offer services other than online shopping to benefit those with disabilities, the elderly, and those who may have a difficult time doing grocery shopping but are not computer literate.

Moore, who recently moved from Garrard County to Somerset, said she is not letting her visual impairment keep her from living life. She and her husband John just celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary.

A self-professed people person, she is attending exercise classes at the senior center and soon will start teaching the class. She is also working to organize a group of people who play the dulcimer, a pastime she enjoys.

Consumer Success Stories



Sam Seavey IV

It only takes a few minutes of speaking with **Sam Seavey IV**, to find out that he is a whiz at assistive technology (AT) and that he loves sharing that knowledge with other blind and visually impaired individuals. Seavey had 20/20 vision until he was 12 years old. When it began to decline, he was diagnosed with Stargardt disease, a juvenile form of macular degeneration.

A native of North Carolina, Seavey attended high school at the North Carolina School for the Blind. After graduation he went to college for a while but didn't do well so he left and moved to Kentucky. Once he settled in Lexington, he started in the restaurant industry. He worked his way up to kitchen shift manager at a large restaurant but his vision worsened and he decided to become a stay-at-home dad until his youngest child started school. During this time, he took a cake decorating class for fun and was so good they offered him a job as a part-time certified cake decorating instructor. After a couple of years, he was no longer able to continue in his position due to his vision loss.

When Seavey bought his first smartphone, he went on YouTube to find videos to help him learn to do more things with his new phone. He found a channel that was particularly helpful and soon the man running the channel advertised for someone to make the videos for him. Seavey applied and was hired. He adapted things so he could work from home. He enjoyed making the videos for the next two years, until the man closed his business.

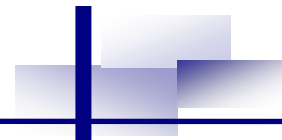
In 2014, Seavey searched YouTube to see if there were any videos on living with a visual impairment. Finding nothing, he started his own channel, The Blind Spot at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNbzN3eHbLKPzItSB560DkA>, which has already garnered over 2,000 subscribers. He does reviews of products, product features, AT information, mobile app videos and "Tips and Trips" videos. His goal is to grow his YouTube channel and get the word out, to reach more people.

In August 2015, Seavey opened a case with OFB. He was referred by his counselor to a volunteer position at the Bluegrass Council of Blind (BGCB) in the AT field. The staff at BGCB was so impressed with him that after six months they hired him as a part-time the AT Program Coordinator. Three days a week he works with individuals who are blind and visually impaired and teaches them how to use their smartphones, tablets, voiceover software and CCTVs.

Seavey's OFB counselor said, "Sam has worked extremely hard and was willing to do whatever necessary to achieve his goal. I referred him to BGCB for a volunteer position in his desired field of AT. From there he took off and made it his own. He has worked tirelessly to help other individuals with visual impairments achieve independence."

Seavey praised OFB for the referral to the position at BGCB, the support he's received and the equipment he needed to do his job. "Going to my job every day knowing I will be helping make others' lives better, getting a paycheck, and pulling my own weight again, makes me very happy," he said.

Consumer Success Stories



Tess Flynn

Tess Flynn was diagnosed with retinitis pigmentosa at the age of five. She got glasses in the first grade but they did not improve her vision. For the next 12 years she barely made it through school because she and her parents decided to hide her vision loss so she wouldn't be put in a special needs class. The Lexington native said that she worked 10 times harder in school just to receive mediocre grades.

Flynn said she learned many ways of fooling her teachers and even her closest friends. She said that once during a test she was called out by a teacher and told to keep her eyes on her own paper. "This was hilarious to me," she chuckled, "since I couldn't even see my own paper, much less someone's across the aisle."

After high school, Flynn worked as a retail department manager in Lexington and then moved on to a couple of office positions. In 2000, Flynn's vision started to worsen and she lost the sight in her left eye but still had good central vision in the right. The company where she worked was downsizing so she decided to leave the workforce to provide child care for her nieces and nephews.

In 2014, the vision in her right eye started declining and she found it increasingly difficult to mask her vision loss. She visited the Bluegrass Council of the Blind (BGCB) in Lexington where she was taught to use the voiceover features of her iPhone, which she said changed everything for her. When Flynn told them she would like to go back to work, they suggested she contact OFB.

Flynn started receiving IL services at the agency and worked with a counselor on making her home more accessible so she could be independent. She is now working with a vocational rehabilitation counselor to become employment ready and is learning to use assistive technology and has received orientation & mobility training. "The use of the cane has given me the feeling of independence and safety. I'm not afraid to go out by myself anymore," she said.

In addition, Flynn's counselor helped her become more work ready by getting a hearing aid through the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and suggesting that she go through the local Dress for Success program which Flynn said has really helped her get in the mindset of going back to work.

Flynn said that she is now an advocate for herself and other blind individuals and has decided that trying to hide her disability is pointless. She said, "I disguised it until I couldn't disguise it anymore." Now she is glad to be able to speak freely about her vision loss and tell others that she is blind. She said that once she made that decision, she felt free.

Flynn recently spoke at a conference before a large audience, something she thought she would never be able to do. She received many compliments and said that it built her confidence. One of her goals is to go into the field of professional fundraising and possibly work with the blind. She is active in the BGCB where she is on the board of directors and does fundraising for the organization.

Flynn's Independent Living counselor said, "Tess has branched out in so many ways, and has become a true advocate for the visually impaired."

Consumer Success Stories



Jason Ginter

Native Kentuckian **Jason Ginter** went into the military after high school. Three years later he returned home and took a job as a truck driver, and although he changed companies, he remained a driver for nearly 14 years. In 2008, his vision started declining rapidly and he could no longer drive. He was diagnosed with serpiginous choroiditis, an uncommon autoimmune condition that causes scarring of the retina. In his case, it was in the center of vision of both eyes.

Ginter was living in Mt. Sterling where there is no public transportation system. He had to rely on friends and family to take him everywhere. He had an old pair of binoculars which he used to see better to walk. He decided to do some research on the internet to see if he could find anything else that may help. He came upon information about OFB and the bioptic driving program. He contacted the office and was fitted for his bioptic device but then told there was a six-month wait for training. He became frustrated and began a letter writing campaign on behalf of OFB for more funding to make the services available to those who wanted to go to work but had to be placed on a waiting list for services.

While waiting for training, Ginter found a job at Walmart as a part-time custodian. He walked to work every day, three miles each way, and was never late. He later got a bike to ride to work. His employer was so impressed with his work ethic that he was promoted to a full-time groundskeeper position within four months. After bioptic driving training, Ginter received his bioptic license and began driving to work. He said the moral support he received from OFB to get and keep a job was invaluable.

"Working has greatly improved my outlook on life," Ginter said. "The bioptic has opened up my world. I can go anywhere and my options are now unlimited. I'm not confined to one little part of the world."

He said that he is so thrilled to be working again and he wouldn't trade it for anything because it gives him a sense of purpose. He would like to be able to help others with disabilities feel the same.

Ginter has become an advocate for those with disabilities. He said that he has a goal of starting a business to employ people with all types of disabilities who want to get back to work and stay at work. He feels that they are discriminated against for having a disability, even if they can do the job.

Ginter said his vision loss has made him aware of how people with disabilities are treated. Many don't move forward because of the stigma that is involved. He is passionate in his desire to help those with disabilities find employment.

"People with disabilities are human beings who have the same dreams and desires, and want a full life just like everyone else. People just want to be valued," Ginter said.

"Jason is one of the most hardworking and motivated individuals I have ever worked with. He refuses to let his visual impairment get in the way of accomplishing his goals," his counselor said. "He actively advocated for himself and others with visual impairments, writing to the governor and even the president, explaining the need for resources for programs such as OFB to assist individuals who are trying to obtain or maintain employment. He has not let his vision loss defeat his abilities and work ethic and has shown great persistence and determination to achieve his goals."

Consumer Success Stories



Sharri Anderson

At 2 months old, **Sharri Anderson** was diagnosed with congenital glaucoma; when she was 10 years old, her right eye had to be removed because of the disease. Years later, a tube was inserted in her left eye to reduce pressure. This worked well for over 25 years but then she noticed her vision was failing. She came to the Office for the Blind (OFB) for services in the 1990s. The Louisville resident received a computer, financial assistance with college tuition for a bachelor's degree, and independent living (IL) services to make her home more accessible and allow her to be more independent in it.

After graduating with a bachelor's degree in social work, Anderson got assistive technology (AT) from OFB to help her do her job at Metro Louisville Health Department. Part of her duties included driving to make home visits. After 12 years, as her vision failed, she had to leave her job because she could no longer drive.

Anderson returned to OFB for services in 2012. She set goals for completing her master's degree in social work (MSW) and gaining the necessary skills to return to work. At the McDowell Center in Louisville, she took AT classes to learn the hardware and software to enable her to read textbooks and use a computer. She was given orientation and mobility (O&M) training to learn cane travel which she said was one of the most important skills she learned because it allowed her to be independent.

Once Anderson finished her training at the McDowell Center, she enrolled at Spalding University in the MSW program. The agency provided her with an iPad to use in class and a Victor Stream Reader to electronically access her textbooks. Anderson was a trailblazer at Spalding where they had never had a visually impaired student. They were receptive to helping her and she guided them on working with the visually impaired. While in school, one of the McDowell Center staff served as Anderson's onsite supervisor and helped her cope and work through things when it got rough. She said that OFB staff was always checking in and encouraging her.

In June, Anderson graduated with a master's degree in social work. Her OFB counselor told her about a vacant weekend residential aide position at the McDowell Center, she applied and was hired.

According to one of her McDowell Center instructors, "Sharri is a terrific role model and an inspiration to the dorm students that she works with."

Anderson said that she likes interacting with the students and helping them through things, since many are far from home and need support. She said she loves her job and has gained the skills and confidence to work with those who are blind and visually impaired. In addition to her job, Anderson is studying to take the certified social worker licensing exam.

Anderson has a passion for helping others and said that down the road she would like to offer her services to those who have disabilities, and go to community churches to make OFB's services known. "When I was going through the experience of my vision worsening, the doctors gave me medication to reduce the pressure in my eye but they never gave me any information on or help through the process of losing my sight," Anderson said. "I know firsthand the fear and frustration that people with disabilities face. I would like for them to know that they aren't alone and that OFB is there to help."

Consumer Success Stories



Filder Auma

Filder Auma lives in Louisville but was born in Africa. Her life has been filled with many obstacles, some that were horrific and which many people would find insurmountable. Prior to immigrating to the United States in 1997, she had already survived torture, rape, human trafficking and the loss of her family due to civil war.

Auma lost her sight at the age of 39 from a thyroid tumor, which has now returned. One day she could see perfectly and the next she was totally blind. The tumor also caused paralysis that she had to work hard to overcome. She lost her job and was in a rehabilitation facility for over a year re-learning to walk, talk and do daily-living tasks.

After finishing her rehabilitation, Auma came to the McDowell Center where she learned home and financial management skills, AT, Braille, O&M. She received a laptop and the technology necessary to pursue her education at the University of Louisville.

Auma said the O & M services she received from OFB “has moved me forward with my life.”

She said that the AT has helped her succeed at school as well as opened the door to a life where she is no longer living in fear. “Without OFB, I would not be where I am in my life,” she said.

In 2016, Auma received a master’s degree in social work with high honors and is now working on a doctorate in psychology. She is working at St. Vincent De Paul and also at the Kristy Love Foundation where they support victims of abuse, addiction and human trafficking.

Auma said that she has faced obstacles getting advanced degrees such as discrimination against people who are blind and against her service dog. She has had to be persistent and advocate for accommodations.

“It has been an uphill battle which I’m so pleased to be winning. Some instructors did not want to allow my service dog, Leo, in their class, but eventually welcomed him,” Auma said. “I was even asked by one professor to drop his class because he didn’t know how to teach a blind person. I used the opportunity to show him that I could do the work. At the end of the semester, he apologized and told me that I was the first student in his seven years of teaching to earn a perfect score in his class and that he was glad I persevered.”

After receiving her doctorate, Auma plans to work for the United Nations to spread awareness about human trafficking, abuse and refugee issues. Auma has already gotten a great start in changing the world for victims of abuse. She sponsored 15 orphans so they could come to America. All of them are successful and have earned a master’s degree or higher. She lives very frugally and sends \$200 a month to pay for rice and beans to feed 24 orphans in India and 24 in Africa. The children live in two small houses that Auma has bought and staffs. She speaks with all 48 children by Skype every Friday to encourage them and let them know they are loved.

Auma said, “I don’t see myself as a woman or as blind. I’m a human being. I want to change the world. You can do anything if you are determined.”

Consumer Success Stories



MaKayla Compton Skeans

MaKayla Compton Skeans, 24, was born with vision loss initially attributed to a cranial deformity. When she was a teen, it was determined that it was actually due to ocular albinism. Skeans began working with OFB as a 10th grader at Pikeville High School in what has become the Pre-Employment Transition Services program. She attended the agency's Insight program for blind and visually impaired high school juniors and seniors, which is held each summer at Morehead State University. Skeans is a very intelligent, hard working young lady as evidenced by being selected as a Governor's Scholar and finishing her bachelor's degree in only four years, despite her visual impairment and holding down a job.

Skeans attributes much of her success to her mother and teachers who encouraged her to push through when she didn't think she could do it. She also credits OFB with the support she received from her counselor, as well as the laptop, books, monocular, dome magnifier and ZoomText software they provided so she could successfully complete college.

"I was from a low-income family and although I earned a full scholarship from the Governor's Scholars program, the Office for the Blind made it possible for me to have the things I needed to complete my education. During my student teaching, they also paid for my roundtrip transportation every day from my home to the school. With no public transportation in the area, they made it possible for me to fulfill my goal," Skeans said.

In May 2014, Skeans graduated from Eastern Kentucky University in Richmond with a bachelor's degree in special education with an emphasis in early childhood education. She is currently working as a special needs assistant at Betsy Lane Elementary School and also works with the Head Start program.

Skeans said she loves her job where she gets to work with students with varying disabilities. "Every time I walk through the door of the classroom, I have the potential to change a child's life," she said. Skeans plans to begin her master's degree program in January 2017 and pursue a full-time teaching position upon graduation.

Skeans said that people don't seem to think that individuals with visual impairments can be successful. She loves proving them wrong. Recently married, Skeans credits her husband with teaching her to drive and encouraging her to get her driver's license. She said this has built her confidence and opened up a whole new world for her. She plans to continue proving people wrong.

Consumer Success Stories



Cole Torbert

Cole Torbert, the son of foreign missionaries, has lived in several countries and is bilingual. When he was three years old his parents noticed a problem with his vision. He was diagnosed with congenital stationary night blindness, which causes his pupils to react opposite of the way they should. He has problems with contrast and depth perception.

While working on his master's degree in counseling at Campbellsville University, he noticed more changes in his vision. The doctor told him his previous condition had progressed and he was diagnosed with retinitis pigmentosa.

In 2013, Torbert contacted Office for the Blind and was provided with independent living services, orientation and mobility, tuition assistance, and assistive technology including special software and a CCTV. He said the assistive technology he received from OFB has been invaluable and allows him to read, do his job and explore things he had been unable to before. The services he

obtained from OFB made the completion of college easier and helped him to become employed.

"Cole is a very persistent and determined young man. What amazed me was that he had been a successful student and did not have services to help him through school until he contacted us. When OFB services were offered, he was surprised that they were available to him," his counselor said.

Torbert commented, "I have been blown away by how helpful the Office for the Blind has been. My counselor always answers immediately and is so supportive of anything I need."

Torbert completed his undergraduate degree in psychology in 2012, at Campbellsville University, and immediately began working on his master's degree there. With his degrees completed, he tried to find a job in the counseling field but none were available.

In 2015 he was hired as a church worship leader and then in September 2016 he was hired as a bilingual customer service representative for an online software company. He said this is an ideal job for him because he can work from home and not have to worry about transportation problems. It also allows him to continue his part-time position as a worship leader.

Torbert is a determined young man who says he doesn't let his disability, or what others consider limitations, define him or what he is capable of accomplishing.

Transition Programs



Summer Work Student

In 2016, the Office for the Blind (OFB) served 446 youth, ages 14-24. Twenty-five achieved competitive integrated employment. There were 279 referrals to the agency with the majority coming from the elementary and secondary educational systems. There were 31 unsuccessful closures. The main reasons were the student were no longer interested or OFB was unable to locate or contact them.

The Office for the Blind works with many agencies to provide transition services and pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities. All of the collaborations described below allow for pre-employment transition services to be provided by either OFB or our partners.

Kentucky Kingdom was the host of this year's Kentucky School for the Blind's (KSB) Summer Work Program. They were the school's first local partner when the program began in 1994. Nearly 1000 students have participated in the program over the years, including Bo Mullins, who is now the World of Work and Intro to Careers teacher at the school. He had this to say about the program, "The students grow up in environments where they are told they can't, or don't have to, work. We are helping them learn the skills they need to have a job to be successful. The students are learning soft job skills, low vision skills and how to educate those around them about their needs."

The Office for the Blind provides the funding for 13 students in the Summer Works Program. The two-week program provides work experiences for students from across the state. Kentucky Kingdom's Food and Beverage department extended job offers to four of the students. "We couldn't let them go, they're too good!" said Erin Smith, Revenue Operations Manager at Kentucky Kingdom.

INSIGHT, a postsecondary preparation program for high school students who are blind or visually impaired, was held on the Morehead State University campus June 3-11. In its 10th year, the program is a collaboration among MSU, OFB, KSB, Kentucky Education Development Corporation (KEDC), and KSB Charitable Foundation. The program is offered to students who have completed grades 10 – 12. It is designed to give them a real college experience, including living in a residence hall, attending academic classes, and practicing orientation and mobility skills in a campus environment. Although a number of INSIGHT alums have gone on to enroll at MSU, the things learned through the program are highly transferrable college skills that will support success at any postsecondary institution.



INSIGHT Students

Transition Programs

In July, 10 students put their summer break to good use by taking part in the three-week Plans to Achieve Transition (PATH) program, an annual summer camp for high school students who are blind or visually impaired. Students resided in the dorms at the McDowell Center in Louisville to experience the fun and challenges of living away from home.



PATH Students



PATH Students

The camp focuses on two core components to help students prepare and plan for their transition from high school to adult life and the many opportunities available. The first component is employability skills training where students explore their vocational interests, learn about further training and education, and practice necessary skills to get and keep a job. The second part exposes students to home and financial management, and strengthens areas such as orientation and mobility, assistive technology, basic computer skills and Braille.

Creating Access to Successful Employment (CASE)



Now more than ever, the job market favors individuals who have at least some additional education or training after high school. Using the resources available through a federal Career Pathways for Individuals with Disabilities grant, OFB is providing consumers opportunities through Project Creating Access to Successful Employment (CASE) to gain skills, certificates and credentials that can open doors to higher paying occupations.

Partnering with KentuckianaWorks in the Greater Louisville area, and Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program in 23 Eastern Kentucky counties, the grant employs six career pathways coordinators (CPCs) to connect student and adult consumers with training and work opportunities in the healthcare, information technology and manufacturing sectors.

In addition, Project CASE has active participation from many career pathways partners working in the Kentucky Career Center, Kentucky Adult Education, the Kentucky Career and Technical College System, and the many dedicated professionals working at the secondary school level. By using the strong framework already in place, Project CASE can identify and fix the gaps that are preventing individuals with disabilities from entering and completing training for occupations that put them on a career pathway to jobs in in-demand fields with sustaining wages and upward mobility.



Career Pathway Coordinators

In Memory



Nancy Tooley

September 3, 1966 – November 11, 2016

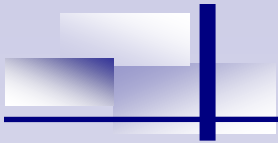
Nancy Tooley was the Office for the Blind's Vocational Rehabilitation Branch Manager over the five offices in the western half of the state.

In her nearly 25 years of service with OFB, Nancy had a tremendous impact on the agency, staff, and its many consumers. Her laughter brought joy to all and she could make a day brighter with her infectious smile and humor. She showed kindness daily with everyone she knew by remembering birthdays, special events, and successes.

Nancy set goals and high expectations for the agency and staff with an equal level of fairness. She was the OFB historian and was often called upon to explain how procedures and policies were developed. She truly was an exemplary employee, always working hard to make the biggest difference in every life she encountered.

In her memory, the Office for the Blind's Executive Leadership Team has established the Nancy E. Tooley Leadership Award. The award will be given annually to a staff member who has demonstrated, both in and out of the workplace, exceptional performance standards. The recipient will display excellence in leadership, integrity, empowerment, accountability and innovation in the workplace. Finally, this individual will never give up on a challenge, continuing to try various solutions until success is achieved.

The kind, caring, and compassionate Nancy Tooley staff knew is the same person her community, family, and friends knew. She had a far-reaching effect in the lives of others and that effect will continue for years to come.



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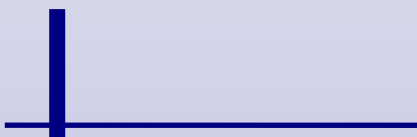
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Education and Workforce Development Cabinet
Department for Workforce Investment
Office for the Blind
State Rehabilitation Council

